Information Management

As information management (IM) *takes on increasing importance in meeting the challenges of global visibility and military necessity, information technology (IT) proliferation will significantly impact the entire spectrum of conflict. While advances in information operations (IO) will allow nonheirarchical dissemination of information, targeting and other critical data at all levels, operating environment diversity, equipment sophistication and increased tempo will place unprecedented demands on commanders and their staffs. Because mountains of data must be acquired and quickly translated into knowledge and understanding, decision making must become increasingly dynamic and multidimensional to match the pace at which situational understanding changes.*

As IT yields new information warfare capabilities, we must redefine the way we collect, manage, communicate and use information. IT will permit the horizontal integration of information and provide a framework for local decision making, potentially expanding a commander's span of control. The dynamics affecting that span are critical because dispersion on the modern battlefield will require forces to act with greater autonomy within an expanded area of operations. Therefore, as the span of control increases, overall situation understanding will become more complex.

Leaders must embrace IM if they hope to wield exceptional battlefield visualization and flawless situational understanding. This issue's focus discusses several IM challenges and how IO and IT are likely to affect our military power relative to future adversaries. We hope these articles impart a greater understanding of IO's potential military utility and how IT is already changing US Army operations and strategy in Bosnia and elsewhere.